

Message Text

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ACTION OES-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00
SOE-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 INR-10 IO-13
L-03 NSF-01 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-05 ICA-11 SS-15
SP-02 DOE-15 INT-05 SMI-01 /135 W
-----000625 071640Z /43

R 070835Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6629
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 KIGALI 1513

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SENV
SUBJECT: PARC DES VOLCANS CONSERVATION PROJECT

REF: KIGALI 1467 (NOTAL), KIGALI 1470 (NOTAL),
KIGALI 1478 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING IS ENGLISH TEXT OF PROPOSAL WHICH ORTPN
DIRECTOR DISMAS NSABIMANA WILL CARRY WITH HIM TO
IUCN CONFERENCE ASHKHABAT LATER THIS MONTH.
ADDRESSEES MAY FIND IT USEFUL IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS
REGARDING PROJECT TO IMPROVE PROTECTION OF GORILLAS
IN RWANDA'S VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK (REFTELS), BUT
EMBASSY'S ROLE IN TRANSMITTING IT SHOULD BE HANDLED DISCREETLY.

2. DEPT WILL NOTE THAT NSABIMANA GIVES CREDIT
TO DIAN FOSSEY FOR ALERTING WORLD OPINION TO PLIGHT
OF GORILLAS, AS WELL AS FOR HELPING TO SUPPRESS POACHING.

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3. IN MY VIEW, PLAN IS MODEST AND SERIOUS, WORTHY OF
CAREFUL CONSIDERATION BY THOSE ATTENDING ASHKHABAT
CONFERENCE. UNFORTUNATELY, IT OMITTS AN ESSENTIAL
INGREDIENT: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BY AN EXPERIENCED
CONSERVATIONIST CAPABLE OF MANAGING A PARK IMPROVE-
MENT PROJECT OVER 2-3 YEAR PERIOD (OMISSION MAY HAVE
BEEN BELGIAN-INSPIRED, AS THEIR ASSISTANCE PEOPLE ARE NOT

WILDLY ENTHUSIASTIC OVER THAT ASPECT). TA INGREDIENT MIGHT BE ADDED--INDEED, INSISTED UPON -- AT ASHKHABAT.

R. BEGIN TEXT. THE PROTECTION OF RWANDA'S GORILLAS

5. THE SOUTHERN, RWANDAN SLOPES OF THE VIRUNGA VOLCANOS, HABITAT OF THE MOUNTAIN GORILLAS, WERE DECLARED AN INTEGRAL RESERVE (ALBERT NATIONAL PARK) BY THE BELGIAN MANDATE ADMINISTRATION IN 1925.

6. AT THAT TIME, RWANDA (28,000 KM2) ALREADY HAD ABOUT 50 INHABITANTS PER KM2, AND ALTHOUGH EACH FARM FAMILY THEN HAD THREE OR FOUR HECTARES OF LAND AT ITS DISPOSAL, THE POPULACE WAS DECIMATED BY OCCASIONALLY TERRIBLE (1932) FAMINES.

7. TODAY, THE DEMOGRAPHIC EXPLOSION HAS RAISED THE COUNTRY'S AVERAGE DENSITY ABOVE 150 INHABITANTS PER KM2. AVERAGE CULTIVABLE LAND PER FAMILY HAS FALLEN TO A CLEARLY INADEQUATE 1.05 HECTARES, CAUSING A VERY WIDESPREAD AND ALARMING ACCELERATION IN EROSION. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, ALTHOUGH THE LANDS OF THE AKAGERA N. P. TO THE EAST ARE LARGELY STERILE AND THE HIGHER ELEVATION ZONES INHABITED BY THE GORILLAS ARE BOTH INHOSPITABLE AND DANGEROUS TO CULTIVATE (STEEPLY SLOPED: EROSION), THE RWANDAN GOVERNMENT HAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAD TO STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN ITS TWO PARKS--WHICH TOGETHER AMOUNT TO ABOUT 10 PERCENT OF NATIONAL TERRITORY--AS INTEGRAL RESERVES, AND IT CONTINUES TO ENCOUNTER POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES IN DOING SO IN THE FACE OF STRONG PRESSURES.

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8. WITH RESPECT TO THE VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK, AFTER 1980 HALF THE 1925DPDVLANDS WERE UNFORTUNATELY SACRIFICED (WITH INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION: FED) BY TURNING OVER TO THE POPULACE ALL THE LOWER SLOPES OF THE VOLCANIC CONES, THE RWANDAN AUTHORITIES, WISHING TO FOLLOW THE ADVICE OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD CONCERNED FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE GORILLAS, TOOK THE COURAGEOUS POLITICAL DECISION TO MAINTAIN THE HIGHER ELEVATION ZONES OF THE VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK INTACT AND PROTECTED, DESPITE THE TRIPLE PRESSURES OF FARMERS, HERDSMEN, AND POACHERS.

9. THE BATTLE AGAINST ENCROACHMENTS BY FARMING AND THE PRESSURE OF DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK IS NOW ALMOST TOTALLY SUCCESSFUL. THE BATTLE AGAINST POACHING, HOWEVER, HAS FOR LACK OF MEANS RUN UP AGAINST THE DIFFICULTIES AND REVERSES WHICH DIAN FOSSEY HAS MADE WIDELY KNOWN AND IN PART ATTENUATED.

10. ONLY BY STRENGTHENING PATROL WORK, INCREASING THE NUMBER OF GUARDS AND ABOVE ALL UPGRADING THEIR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MOBILITY, TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT, CAN A COMPLETE CORRECTION OF THE SITUATION BE BROUGHT ABOUT.

11. THE RWANDAN GOVERNMENT EARNESTLY HOPES FOR SUCH IMPROVEMENT AND IS PREPARED TO PAY THE SALARIES OF THE ADDITIONAL GUARDS IF THESE CAN BE HOUSED AND UTILIZED EFFECTIVELY. THE LOCAL JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES (RUHENGERI) DEAL SEVERELY WITH WRONDOERS BROUGHT BEFORE THEM; BUT THE CAPTURE OF POACHERS IS DIFFICULT BECAUSE THE GUARDS PRESENTLY STILL LIVE WITH THEIR FAMILIES AT SOME DISTANCE FROM THE PARK LIMITS (KINIGI) AND OFTEN AMONG THE LOCAL INHABITANTS (WHICH IS HARMFUL IN EVERY SENSE). THE CONSTRUCTION OF SIX BILLETS AT KINIGI (WWF), THE RECENT INSTALLATION OF ELEVEN RONDAVELS AT FIVE KM INTERVALS ALONG THE PRESENT PARK BORDER, AND THE THREE

ADDITIONAL RONDAVELS ABOUT TO BE BUILT WITHIN THE PARK (BELGIAN AID) HAVE HELPED A LITTLE BIT TO CORRECT THE WEAKNESSES OF PARK PATROL WORK, BUT THIS PROGRESS IS STILL ALTOGETHER INSUFFICIENT.

12. TO MASTER THE SITUATION, IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY THAT SEGMENTS OF ROADWAY BE GUILT ALONG THE BORDERS OF THE PARK (A SINGLE ROAD, FROM END TO END, IS PREFERABLE BUT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE DUE TO THE IRREGULAR TERRAIN), PERMITTING GUARDS TO CIRCULATE BY JEEP AND THUS MOVE QUICKLY WHEN CALLED BY PATROLS OR OPERATING AGAINST POACHERS. MOREOVER, AT LEAST ONE SUB-STATION SHOULD BE BUILT AND EQUIPPED ON THE SOUTHERN SLOPES OF KARISIMBI VOLCANO.

13. RWANDAN RESOUCNES WILL NOT ALLOW SUCH AN UNDERTAKING (ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDINGS, A VEHICLE AND ITS OPERATING COSTS, EQUIPMENT: E.G., WALKI-TALKIE); THEREFORE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THIS NECESSARY PROTECTION ACTIVITY, WHOSE COST WOULD BE ONE THE ORDER OF US \$208,000 MUST BE FINANCED FROM ABROAD.

14. THE ASHKHABAT CONFERENCE IS AN EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE THE TIMELINESS AND POSSIBLITY OF SUCH AN INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTION.

15. BUDGET OUTLINE	US\$
A. NECESSARY ROADWAY CONSTRUCTION, TO PERMIT TRANSPORT OF GUARDS AND TO TRACE PARK BORDERS DEFINITELY (COST INFLUENCED BY TERRAIN)	100,000
B. BUILDINGS	
SUB-STATION AT KARISIMBI	
- BILLETS	30,000
- ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	10,000
PARK ENTRANCE BUILDING	5,000
C. TRANSPORTATION	
ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE (ONE ONLY TO EGIN)	12,000
OPERATING COSTS DURING FIRST 3 YEARS (WHICH RWANDA CANNOT PAY)	30,000
D. GUARD EQUIPMENT	
SUPPLEMENTING THAT PROVIDED BY BELGIUM (100 OUTFITS FOR 50 GUARDS)	5,000
E. SIX OR EIGHT WALKIE-TALKIE UNITS	6,000
F. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY AMONT POPULACE	10,000

	208,000

END TEXT.
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